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Purity and statecraft: the Fulani jihād and its empire

Walter E. A. van Beek

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Purity and statecraft. The nineteenth century Fulani jihād of North Nigeria

Walter van Beek.

Introduction

Shading himself from the fire Teri Sunu keeps peering into the dark skies, looking for the trim, bleak sickle of the new moon. His friends around the fire call him back: 'No use looking for the sky, for the new moon. This years' Ramadan will not start until the Sokoto Imam has announced it. Come and listen to the 'poste radio'. Through the cracking and whistling noise a fulfuldé speaking voice is heard, announcing that the moon sickle has been spotted. The 1972 Ramadan has started, in Sokoto, but also in the village of Mogodé, tucked away in the Mandara hills of North Cameroon some 1000 kilometers from Sokoto, as the raven flies.

Such a scene of a pagan community listening to their old Muslim enemy, the Fulani, can be witnessed throughout West-Africa. They may have been scourged by these Fulani in the last two centuries, the fact remains that these isolated communities have been drawn into one of the largest state building movements of Afrika. It was a holy war, a movement to purify Islam, that brought this about, the jihād of Usman dan Fodio.

My aim in this paper is to show why such 'pagan' peoples as the Kapsiki were involved in a puritanic movement, why, in fact, they had to be drawn in through the process of state formation that in itself was a corollary of the Islamic puritan movement. I hope to show that the impetus of the state building process resides in a

complex set of factors, of which the drive for purification is a very important one, but that the outcome of the empire formation for a larger part depends on non-ideological factors. Eventually, the impact of these factors tends to reshape the puritanical movement into an administration, the practical exigencies of which will destroy the original ideals. The quest for purity ends in an imperial organization.

The pre-jihād situation

The history of Northern Nigeria up to the 19th century is dominated by the Hausa city states. Though of one tribal origin, the Hausa never formed a coherent political body. Small states like Kebbi, Zamfara, Gobir and Zazzau tried to gain a lasting ascendancy over one another, and through this internecine warfare, invariably found themselves under the actual or nominal dominion of other powers.

When during the 14th and 15th centuries the Hausa states grew ever more populous and wealthy, they became a potential source of booty and tribute for the eastern Bornu empire that was situated around lake Chad.. In the sixteenth century Songhai, operating from Gao, was able to conquer Hausaland, as the different Sarkin (chiefs) of the states failed to unite against the common enemy. The tenuous Songhai hold over the area was interrupted by internal war between the states, and in the 18th century by the short apogee of the Kwararafa Jukun kingdom from the South. From 1734 the area was under Bornu command again (Johnston 1967:14).

The Hausa states, as well as their conquerors, can be best characterised as 'predator states', relying on raids and wars to 'harvest their crop of slaves', the spoils of war feeding the warrior aristocracies (Smaldone 1977:12). Captured slaves were needed for cash crop production and for long distance commerce, in which they were exchanged for horses and - later - guns. Thus, the means of destruction - armies - served as a means of state production (Goody 1968). This dependency on slave raiding is a central issue in the understanding of the results of the jihād, and will be discussed in greater detail later. On this basis the Hausa had built an elaborate state apparatus, with a great number of officials and a strict hierarchical ranking. In the city artesan guilds, often of slave extraction too, were an important part of the society. In the periphery of the city the cultivators raised their crops in a serf-like dependency on the overlords.

Between the largely settled Hausa cultivators, the Fulani lived with their cattle. This tribe, one of the great enigma's of West Africa, is central in the story of nineteenth century puritan Islam. From the tenth century onwards (Hatch 1970) they wandered from their Futa Jalon homeland westwards, gradually drifting into Hausaland at least before the sixteenth century (Johnston 1967:24), arriving in some area's before the Hausa (Webster & Boahen 1967). Eventually they drifted east of lake Chad, even as far as Khartoum. Theirs is the story of the nineteenth century Emirates, theirs is the story of the **jihād**; they purified West-African Islam. Together they number over 6 million, spread out unevenly over the whole of the Sudan belt of West Africa. Their largest concentrations were and are in their Futa homelands, in Mali and in Northern Nigeria. In Hausaland they numbered about 30% of the Hausa population (Hatch 1970, Shaw 1978).

The third party in the political set up were the slaves. Hausa society and to a lesser extent Fulani society fed on captives. Hausa courts were replete with slaves filling in all possible slots in the organization, even occupying important positions like minister of the interior or chief of all slaves (Smith 1978:138, 141). Such slave officials could own slaves themselves. The slaves outside the courts were responsible for most of the staple crop production and made up a considerable part of foot soldiers in the Hausa army (Smith 1960:134).

The fourth party comprised the pagan groups living in the margin of the city state or - later - on the fringes of the empire. The Kapsiki of our introduction are part of this category, as are the numerous tribes of the central Nigerian plateau. These are the people who were habitually raided for slaves; though they never converted to Islam, they do form an important part of the empire, as they form the slave reserve needed for the functioning of the economic and political apparatus.

The Fulani at the end of the eighteenth century by no means presented an undifferentiated unit. Not only were they composed of several large, politically independent clans, many of them did not live as cattle nomads (Monad 1975, Stenning 1959, 1966). In the margin of the cattle raising Fulani and their (ex-)slaves who either raised cattle or cultivated staple crops, the Fulani harboured a large number of scholars, men versed in the Quran and Islamic law, who preached and taught sunnitic Islam of the Maliki school (Lewis 1966:9). In fact, Fulani society was able to sustain an astonishingly large number of Muslim scholars, who wandered with the herdsmen,

and - if family circumstances permitted them - took off for their pilgrimage (Last 1967:lxxviii). They had few possessions, being nomads, but nurtured the books they had as priceless treasures. In fact, besides being able to recite the entire Quran in Arabic, they possessed - and knew by heart - whatever book they could get hold of. They travelled extensively to each other, and took years to be taught at the house of another scholar. Islamic teachers of great repute, were sought after throughout the Sudan, and their pupils travelled over thousands of kilometers to them.

This was facilitated by three factors. First, the geographical setting of the Sudan zone makes travel very easy, either on horseback or on foot. Secondly, wherever a scholar went in this zone, he always found fellow Fulani around, to help and house him, and to listen to his teachings and preachings, greatly appreciating his presence. Thirdly, all scholars spoke and wrote in at least three languages, Fulani, Hausa and Arabic. Thus, the whole range of Arabic learning was open to them; in fact they almost routinely travelled to the great Islamic centers of teaching. One example from that period may illustrate this: The famous traveller Barth reports meeting in 1852 in Baghirmi (now in Chad), an elderly and completely blind Fulani called Sambo.

'I could scarcely have expected to find in this out-of-the way place a man not only versed in all branches of Arabic literature, but who had even read (nay, possessed a manuscript of) those portions of Aristotle and Plato which had been translated into .... Arabic, and who possessed the most intimate knowledge of the countries which he had visited.'

This man had studied many years in El Azhar in Egypt, in Zebid in Yemen, famous for the science of logarithms, from Bagdad to Andalos (Barth 1857, III:373). So the intellectual scene of the era was remarkably open, people travelling extensively, writing books in the classical Arabic tradition with the full support of their cattle herding tribesmen (Last 1967: lxxvi).

This is mainly a Fulani picture, though Touareg scholars (Norris 1975:146 ff) and some Hausa scholars (Smith 1978:28ff) fit in too. Despite wars that raged between the Touareg and Fulani at several times, the scholars did keep their contact. The majority of Hausa scholars however, Muslim too, were officials in the court of the Sarkin (kings) of the various states. Their allegiance to Islam (as was to be stated with great vigour by the reformers) was compromised by this dependency. The Sarkin overlords had multiple religious loyalties, being at the same time Muslim Sultan and cult

official for the numerous pagan cults. Thus, in the eyes of the Fulani **mallam** (scholar) at least, the Hausa scholars were tainted, an issue on which we will return later.

The Shehu

Despite the range of learning and travelling, most of the religious training was done by kinsmen, uncles or cousins; if possible the father or an an elder brother. The Fulani, however cosmopolitans as they were, remained and still are very clan conscious. Thus, the Toronkawa clan, one large Fulani clan which is closest to the Tucolor of Futa Toro, as a whole has had a tremendous impact on West African history. They are the theologians of this **jihād**, but also of other holy wars: they are the prime movers of at least four empires (Webster & Boahen 1967, Adeleye 1974, Clarke 1982).

The **jihād** that resulted in the Sokoto empire is dominated by one Toronkawa family, that of Usman dan Fodio, a towering figure who is practically a national hero-saint in Nigeria (Shagari & Boyd 1977). Born on 15 December 1754 in the realm of Gobir, the most powerful Hausa state at that time, he lived most of his life as a nomadic scholar, wandering with his kinsmen and their herds. Degel, close to the Gobir centre, was the area of his early years. In his youth he was taught by his father Muhammed Fodio, by an uncle and a distant relative. The latter's teaching took Usman to Agadesh, a renowned center of learning in that era. There he met the most influential Muslim scholar of the late 18th century, el hadj Jibril b. Umar, not a Fulani but of Berber origin (Last 1967:5). Jibril preached a revived, vigorous and uncompromising Islam; his message echoed the Wahhābite teachings, that were gaining acceptance in the Arab peninsula those very years (see Waardenburg, this volume). He had become acquainted with those ideas during his first pilgrimage. When Jibril left for his second journey to Mekka, Usman was called back by his father, so the young man could not perform a pilgrimage. In later years family responsibilities again prohibited Usman from his **hadj**; this 'failure' was a lifelong regret to him. In many poems he expressed his deep desire to visit the holy places, to walk in the traces of the prophet and to worship Allah as a pilgrim (Last 1967:212). His multiplying commitments kept him from this journey, which would have lasted between eight and ten years.

Through these teachers Usman was introduced to the Quran, to the sunnitic tradition and to the finely tuned jurisprudence and judicial reasoning of the Shari'a in the Maliki school. In addition to

this orthodox schooling, he was initiated into Sufism, to one of the many strains of Islamic mysticism i.e. the teachings of al-Qadiri, the great Baghdad mystic Si Mohammed Abdel Qader al Djilani (Triaud 1969:155; Hiskett 1973:60). Among the many 'mystic ways' this Qadiriya order was one the dominant ones of in West Africa. Its spread and influence date from the times of al Maghili in the late fifteenth century (Hiskett 1973:5); from that time the spread and consolidation of Islam went hand in hand with the spread of Sufism (Abun-Nasr 1965:6-7). Qadiriya Sufism, with its strong combination of scholarship, ascetism and mysticism, was to mold the teaching of the Fodio family for generations. After the establishment of the Caliphate (the later phase of the Sokoto empire) the Tijaniya order would encroach upon Qadiriya holdings (Triaud 1969:167; Abdun-Nasr 1965:138 ff.), by means of the empire el Hadj Umar was to carve out from Segu, as well as from within (Triaud 1969:168). Still, Qadiriya remained dominant in Sokoto (Martin 1976).

About the same time the Shehu (which is the usual indication of Usman dan Fodio in the literature, meaning Shaikh in Hausa) was conferred his **ijaza** (licence to preach), a new ruler, Bawa, attained the Hausa throne of Gobir (Johnston 1967:28). As a strong-willed Sarkin, he was hated by the Fulani because of the severity with which he ordered the cattle tax (**jangali**) to be assessed and collected. Many Fulani, refusing to pay this tax, had their cattle seized (Hopen 1958:10). The animosity and friction which this caused, was by no means the first problem between the Gobirawa (Hausa of Gobir) and the Fulani, but proved to be one of the major factors shaping Shehu's course (Johnston 1957: 29). Like many frictions to come, this one was immediately translated into a religious issue, i.e. the absence of Shari'a legitimacy to levy such a cattle tax (Hiskett 1973: 143-4). Shehu Usman pointed out that this tax was not one of the seven forms of taxations authorized by Islamic law; it could be legal if and only if it was a kind of **jiziya**, a tax levied on non-Muslims, as the majority of the Fulani were non-Muslims. However, in that case it should have been a poll-tax and not a cattle tax (Johnston 1967:31).

The Shehu, who was just twenty when he started on his preaching and teaching tours throughout the region, quickly became an established authority on theology and law. Roaming widely from his little township of Degel, which was only a hundred kilometers from the Gobir capital Alkalawa, the Shehu made preaching tours in Zamfara and Kebbi, going as far south as Illo and north till Daura (Smith 1968:143; Hiskett 1973:44). In these other Hausa states, the power of Bawa was much smaller; some of them were vassals of

Gobir, while the eastern ones paid tribute to Bornu. In these tours the Shehu preached the fundamentals of sunnitic Islam: the unity of God, the foundation and pillars of the faith, righteousness and reward in paradise, sin and punishment. As each Islamic theologian he gave minute instructions in ritual and judicial matters. The proper ways of ablutions, prayer and fasting, tithes and alms, oaths and marriage contracts were stressed (Hiskett 1973:49ff). When the Shehu's large successes in Kebbi and Zamfara became known in Alkalawa, he was invited to the Gobir court. In this as well as later audiences the Shehu took the Sarkin to the task of being a true Muslim prince, to abstain from oppression of fellow-Muslims, and to shun any comprise in religion. Rejecting large alms the ruler offered, the Shehu managed to wrangle some liberties and indulgencies from the Gobir court e.g. liberty to preach freely to all people, Fulani and Hausa, and the alleviation of taxes. The fact that the 75 year old Bawa granted these demands, showed his eagerness to incorporate the new upstart preacher into his dominion, in order to leave a stable state for the next Sultan (Last 1967:7). From this time any person wearing a turban (the token of a Muslim identity) would be respected and no one would be kept from praying or preaching, a major result for the Shehu.

In the next six years Bawa's sons Ya'kub reigned and died in battle, and the might of Gobir waned because of a succession by weak rulers. In the mean time, the Shehu became the nexus of a slowly growing Community, numbering several hundreds of people, who formed the hard core of fervent believers in the later **jihād**, and whose influence through contact with visiting **mallams** and through teaching tours far exceeded their numerical importance. In a later stage the Sarkin is reported to have commented on the Shehu's waxing power: 'My father has allowed a seedling to wax, and now it has grown to large to uproot' (Smaldone 1977: 34).

The start of the jihād

Triggered by increasing friction between Hausa rulers and Fulani Muslims, and fired by a strong conviction and a clear sense of vocation, the Shehu set out to attack religious laxity in the Gobir court. In one of his most famous books, he accused the Sarkin court of a great number of serious transgressions, which no Muslim prince should indulge in. These were: officiating in idolatrous rites, non-observance of proper marriage rules, indulgence in heathen divination practices, enslavement of Muslims, alliance with pagan groups,

non-observance of modesty, drinking alcoholic beverages, prostitution, and - of course - illegitimate taxes (Johnston 1967:31 ff). The rulers also forced people to serve in the army even though they were Muslims (Clarke 1982:115). The gist of his accusations, in this as well as in later cases, was that the Shari'a was not the basis of official law. A proper **Dar-al-Islam** should follow the Shari'a. To establish this was the single most important purpose of the Shehu's life. He followed three strategies consecutively: reform his fellow Fulani, reform the Hausa court and when the first was completed and the last one failed, to wage the holy war.

So an important 'weapon' in the impending **jihād**, was the Shehus pen. The Shehu, his brother Abdulla, his son Mohammed Bello, his first wife and several of his daughters were accomplished writers and poets in the classical Arabic tradition. The Shehu through his poems recorded his objections to the Hausa rulers, his experiences and his eventual call to the **jihād**. Apart from that, he wrote over fifty scholarly works, discussing doctrinal and judicial matters with local scholars, outlining the proper way for everyday life, explaining the principles of Sufism. The great majority of these works, ranging in size from five folios to substantive thick volumes, was aimed at the Fulani, at raising the standard of Islam (Last 1967: 9). Most books are written in Arabic, and most poems in Fulfulde. From his Hausa writings, little has survived (Hiskett 1973:37).

In accordance with the prophecies of Al-Maghili, people at that time expected the Mahdi, as several local prophets had indicated the years 1200-1204 (1786-1790) for the Mahdi to arrive. Throughout his later life, the Shehu was habitually considered as the Mahdi, though he took great pains to deny it. He did believe the Mahdi traditions, which are perfectly in harmony with sunnitic teaching, but he considered himself one of the forerunners of the Mahdi (Hiskett 1973:122). However, as long as the actual fighting took place the Shehu did not deny his Mahdi-ship too vigorously, as it provided an additional motivation for his people. After the decisive victory, Usman made it clear that neither the advent of the Mahdi nor the End of time were close at hand (Clarke 1982: 120).

While living his austere life in the open countryside of Degel, trying to exhort his fellow Fulani and reform his ever more hostile Hausa ruler, the Shehu in about 1794 had some mystic experiences which helped him shape his further course in life. He reports having seen the saints, and being invested with 'the sword of truth' to use against the enemies of Allah, while his son Mohammed Bello was specially singled out to fight the **jihād** (Last 1967: 10). Though the **jihād** would not start for another decennium, this message undoubt-

edly assisted in persuading the Shehu's Community that Hausa rule would not be changed by preaching alone.

After a rapid succession of some Gobir Sultans after the death of Bawa in 1795, Yunfa, a former pupil of the Shehu (Last 1967:43), was elected to the throne. Despite their good personal relationship, Yunfa tried to get rid of the Shehu, first by an assassination attempt, then by mounting persecution against the Fulani. His policy wavered with the varying pressures at court. Though at one time he retracted a predecessor's proclamation that forbade preaching Islam, conversion and the wearing of the turban (Last 1967:12), the prevailing mood of his court and the exigencies of his war with Zamfara increasingly turned him against the scholars of the Community. He even sold Muslims into slavery, a capital offense in the eyes of the Shehu (Last 1967:14). After an unfortunate accident between Fulani and the Gobirawa of Yunfa the Shehu's Community fled from Degel to the western border of Gobir, in Gundu. Here they could count on their support from Kebbi and could build their first stronghold, rallying their forces for the cause of the 'Community'. In doing this the Shehu followed the classical pattern of Mohammeds **hijra** i.e. the move to Medina. As Mohammed's exile starts the Muslim calendar, the exile of the Shehu was considered as the start of the **jihād**, and as such of the Sokoto empire.

The sources indicate that the Shehu was at best a reluctant **mujahedin**, who did not seek the holy war (Hiskett 1977:73). On the other hand he did not eschew it. When circumstances temporarily turned against the Community, he proved to be the staunchest supporter of the chosen way. In this he may have been bolstered by the success two Muslim reformers had had a few years earlier in the Fulani/Torankawa homelands Futa Jalon and Futa Toro (Trimingham 1968:161-162). Anyway, people came flocking to the Shehu in his bush outpost of Gudu, and the Community soon grew to ominous proportions, as the Gobir Sultan saw it. After some dalliances Yunfa declared war on the Community; in response the Community in a historic meeting choose the Shehu as its formal leader, as Commander of the Faithful, **Amir al-Mumīnin**, and raised the standard of the **jihād** (Johnston 1967:42). The first battle, at Tabkin Kwatto - since then a pilgrimage center for the Fulani - settled the course of the **jihād**. Against all odds the Fulani resisted the shock of the Hausa cavalry, and rooted the much stronger Gobirawa army. In Bello's own succinct words:

'The Lord broke the army of the godless, so that they fell back, and in their flight they were scattered.... We followed at their heels and slew them that they perished.... All day we pursued them and only at

dusk we did return to say the evening prayer and to give thanks to God, the Lord of Creation.' (Bello, cited in Johnston 1967:46.)

The slightly apologetic note that they omitted some prayers, is typical for the strict observance of the rites in the Community.

From this victory omwards the course of the **jihād** was by no means easy. A kind of guerilla warfare developed in which the **mujahedeen** suffered some severe setbacks (Smaldone 1977:38) but in the end they succeeded in defeating Gobir. They took its capital Alkalawa, and killed Yunfa. From there, they started to build their own empire. The crucial issue was the overthrow of Hausa Gobir, called 'the long Campaign', which took from 1804 till 1808; during those years the fate of the **jihād** hung in balance at least three times (Johnston 1967:56).

The reasons for the military success of the Fulani are varied. First the political situation of Gobir never had been strong in itself, as it heavily relied upon slaves and allies for warfare. The Shehu's generals, his son Bello and his brother Abdullah, managed to separate Gobir from all its allies before delivering their final blow. Secondly, though both armies largely depended upon cavalry, the decisive factor in many early battles have been the range, precision and cold-bloodedness of the Fulani archers (Smaldone 1977:25-30). Thirdly, the Fulani generals, despite their incidental vacillations and mistakes, were on the whole much more skillful than their Hausa colleagues. Finally, success came from the general prerequisites of a successful guerilla war: insurgence throughout a vast political arena at the same time, reliance on local domestic production for food and arms, weapons captured from the enemy, and above all a sense of mission, of extraordinary commitment. It is this commitment, the deep conviction of carrying on a **jihād** in the name of God, that made success possible in guerilla warfare. Through the simple act of passing on a **jihād** flag the Shehu could sent forth soldier-scholars to remote areas to spread the rebellion. It is through this commitment that the Fulani generals in every possible instance took the initiative, taking the enemy off guard (Smaldone 1977:34-35). This kind of self abnegating abandonment to the cause of Allah in fact was a major factor in later battles. Though they had only a few dozen horses in their first battle, the Fulani rapidly developed a large cavalry force, which proved decisive in their flexible military strategy. Fighting a **jihād** was fighting on horseback, shock-fighting. Such a cavalry charge, as the one depicted below can only be fought well when death in the battlefield has its own immediate and superlative rewards.

The Cavalry Charge (from Hiskett 1973:85)

Pagan groups, which either as slaves or as allies, fought in the Hausa armies, were invariably overwhelmed by this style of fighting. Their own tactics aim at preserving their own life and at limiting losses more than annihilating the enemy (van Beek 1987).

The same conviction did hold for any military engagement: major battles against Hausa Sultans were **jihād**, but also small skirmishes against insurgents once the empire was established. Even slave raiding among pagans was considered a **jihād**. So each and every campaign was legitimated by the full force of doctrine resulting in a maximum motivation of the soldiers (Smaldone 1977:35).

Building an empire

After the fall of Alkalawa, the **jihād** entered its second stage. Scholar-soldiers carried the banners of the **jihād**, blessed by the Shehu, to the far reaches of Hausaland and beyond. In the period between 1808 and 1812 the theater of war shifted towards the west, east and south, establishing the **Dar-al-Islam** in Bauchi, Gurma, Daura, Kebbi, Zamfara, and Adamawa (see map). Sokoto was built by

Bello as a capital in 1809, as the twin capital of Gwandu (Johnston 1977:56ff).

Building the Caliphate of Sokoto was building the **Dar-al-Islam** and the early Caliphate of Mohammed's successors was the major inspiration of the leaders. The Shehu, bearing the title of **Khalifa**, was not only the undisputed leader of Northern Nigeria, but as **Amir al-Mumīnin** was considered the supreme leader of all Muslims. Though some Islamic doctrines only allow for one supreme Imam (Gibb 1957: 55) there is ample jurisprudence for tolerating two Caliphs as long as they are sufficiently separated in time and space (Last 1967:46-47). In the middle of the nineteenth century, West Africa knew six supreme Imams: Ahmad of Masina, el hadj Umar at Segu, the Askia of Songhai, the Mai of Bornu, the Shehu of Sokoto and the Sultan of Ahir at Agadesh. This proliferation of supreme commanders not only reflects the loose organization of Islamic institutions in general, but the political situations in the nineteenth century Sahel-Sudan zone too.

Within the empires the same organizational characteristics prevailed. The Emirates carved out by the local **jihād** delegated from Sokoto were under nominal control from the capital only. The Emirs fought their own wars without initial help from the central government, rallied their own following of faithful Fulani, negotiated for allies and ransacked the pagan strongholds in search of slaves. Being scholars of some renown each of them, they formed their own schools, wrote their own books and established their own **Dar-al-Islam**. They invariably and by all means most sincerely ascribed to the religious supremacy of the Shehu - and his successors - and thus to the rightful ascendancy of the central Sokoto government. However, factual rapports between Sokoto and the Emirates were few. The most important ones were the regular levies in wealth and slaves that had to go to Sokoto, and the right of Sokoto to choose a successor for a deceased Emir. Both rights were jealously guarded by the central government and were reciprocated with military assistance when needed and with religious support at all times (Last 1967:103 ff).

When consolidating the Fulani reign, the Shehu sought to establish once and for all the Shari'a as the basis of practical law, as in his view this was the one and only means to build a real **Dar-al-Islam**. In fact, the **jihād** had been fought for this very reason. The hated cattle-tax was abolished, and replaced by approved Muslim taxes, of which the **zakat** was the most important. The Shehu kept his state officials to a minimum: a Vizier, a judge, a chief of police and a land-tax official (Last 1967:57). Though some other officials

were appointed later, the number remained a fraction of the population of the Hausa courts (Smith 1978:105-106; 1960:42 ff). The Shehu went to great lengths to have his administration and its courts uphold the values of soberness and scholarship, and to preach these values to his followers (Shagari & Boyd 1977:29). Though his son built the city of Sokoto as the new capital, the Shehu himself lived outside its walls most of his remaining years, preferring a modest house in a nearby village. Here he dwelt with his wives and smaller children, assisted by his trusted and all-important Vizier. Regular conferences were held by the generals who came to consult the Shehu in his village. The Commander of the faithful left wordly affairs to his son and brother, and spent his last five years teaching and writing. Eleven books date from this period (Last 1967:57). They deal with the work of the Community; Mahdism; the charges of Bornu (see below). On Thursday evenings he preached against oppression of the poor, against robbery in the markets and the condoning of crimes, as well as on the more esoteric subjets of Qadiriya Sufism and genealogies (Hiskett 1977:118 ff). He kept reminding his people Mohammed's adhortations about the great **jihād** of the spirit that was to follow their small **jihād** of the war (Shagari & Boyd 1977:28 ff). For him as well as for his son Bello, both types of **jihād** were permanent. Bello's scathing remarks about the spiritual status of the new Community members are revealing; of the ten types of **jihād** participants he describes, only one is a real member: someone who shuns tribalism, has no fear for wordly authority, is a scholar as well as a soldier, has no regard for his own fame or well being, does not value wordly possessions, is not fascinated by horses, does not love fighting, but is motivated only by the love of Allah giving up all possessions and relations, even his life, for the world to come (Last 1967:59). The Shehu and Bello succeeded in some measure in having these values of soberness, austerity and scholarship recognized as the major attitude rulers should have. Throughout the nineteenth century, Sokoto remained both a centre for scholarship and pilgrimage as well as the capital of the largest state in West Africa (Last 1967:113).

Pagans as a resource

No state, however pious, can exist without revenues. The Shari'a-based **zakat** was collected in Sokoto province, but for the outer provinces this was insufficient. The major state income in addition to the **zakat** were the revenues from the political hierarchy: presents

from newly appointed officials or aspirant civil servants' donations and levies from the Emirs. Though Emirs were compelled to send only their tax surpluses to the capital, the size of their contributions reflected their own status (Last 1967:105). A fixed portion of any dead Emir's inheritance fell to Sokoto. At least as important (Smith 1978:304) as all these revenues was the share of the booty taken by the Emirs on their own **jihād**-expeditions. As a devout leader had to go on expedition with great regularity, booty was sent annually to Sokoto, usually in the form of captives. Though instead of slaves the **jizya** (poll-tax or protection money) could be sent, slaves made up the greater bulk of the spoils of war (Fage 1969, Last 1967:102-107).

Two factors contributed to the success of the empire, increasing the number of slaves. Firstly, the 19th century is one of the few centuries in West African history without a large scale drought (Bryson & Murrey 1977:95 ff). So, the pagan groups (as well as the rest of the empire population) were numerous, as no hunger decimated them. Secondly, in roughly the same period as the jihād the African system of slavery was in a process of transformation (Lovejoy 1983). The abolitionist drive gradually eliminated the transatlantic slave export from the West African coast. Though far removed from the Sokoto center, this had its reverberations for the Caliphate. As Lovejoy convincingly argues, the net result for West Africa was not the demise of slave raiding, nor of slave commerce, let alone of indigenous slavery. The most important immediate result was an abundance of slaves for the internal market, stimulated also by the fact that the traditional 'markets' for slaves - North Africa and the Middle East - were shrinking (Fyle 1974). Thus developed a full-grown 'slave mode of production' (Lovejoy 1983:269 ff), transforming the quest for purity into a state which 'fed on slaves'. Throughout, the various holy wars that swept through sudan Africa (the Sokoto case is one among several) 'created a new slaving frontier on the basis of rejuvenated Islam' (Lovejoy 1983:154). Raiding slaves was a continuous enterprise, with the Caliphate even raiding as far south as the northern limits of the Zaire river, through Ilorin, a dependent emirate (Lovejoy 1981b).

Without this continuous supply of slaves it is difficult to see how the Caliphate could have expanded and consolidated as it has done. Slaves were needed for cultivation of the domestic crops. In order to feed the towns, officials, herdsmen, armies and caravans, plantation villages were set up around the cities, where slaves produced the diverse staple foods (Lovejoy 1978, 1979). They also supplied the great majority of the arts and craftsmen - making weapons - , spun

and wove to make clothes and made up a considerable part of the army as foot-soldiers and archers (Fisher 1971a). As indicated above, even government positions were often filled by slaves. The great advantage for the rulers was that they had few allegiances other than towards their master who put them into such a comfortable position, while they could never take his place. As barter value they were of crucial importance for the army too. Warhorses could not be bred on the Sokoto-occupied plains in suffiently large numbers. The large horses used for cavalry came from the North and from the Western Sudan (Johnson 1976), and in both cases had to be bartered for captives (Fage 1969; Flint 1974). So the quest for purity indirectly stimulated the slave trade throught the Sahara and even opened the way for the 'northern' slaves to be sold all the way South, where they were found in Asante (modern Ghana) (Torre 1978:418). The exchange towards the South was especially important in obtaining guns.

The slaves made up a sizeable portion of the total population. For the Sokoto area Barth estimated them at 50% of all inhabitants of the greater Kano-Sokoto region (Barth 1857 I:523). So a steady supply of captives was absolutely essential for the Caliphate. These captives could not be obtained in the vicinity of Sokoto, as few pagan groups lived there. The Caliphate for this purpose followed two courses. First, treaties with enemies were established in order to exchange prisoners of war (Lovejoy 1983:155). More important still, was the continuous raiding of the frontier pagans. The Emirates of the southern and eastern fringes, where large pockets of pagan groups resided, were crucial for this.

As an example the Emirate of Adamawa will serve. In the 1850's it sent 1000 slaves a year to Sokoto as tribute, receiving about 5000 cpatives a year from its dependencies (Lovejoy 1983:157). This emirate formed the easternmost expanse of the empire: its territory now is part of North-Eastern Nigeria and North Cameroon. Tensions between the local Bata and the numerous Fulani of the area had been flaring up into fighting even before the start of the Sokoto-**jihād**. In 1806 Modibo Adama, a young Fulani scholar, was received with great honors at Sokoto, and was presented a **jihād** flag by the Shehu. With this supreme backing, Adama managed to rally his Fulani tribal kin as well as some local pagan chiefs behind him, and waged a long and arduous series of wars against the many pagans living in the area (Kirk-Greene 1969:129 ff). Some of those resisted themselves very successfully, relying on the natural terrain or on tactical defense. The Mandara mountains, the area where our opening example was situated, are a good example of the kind of

refuge the local cultivators sought (van Beek 1978, 1987). So throughout the large Emirate of Adamawa, large pockets of pagan cultivators defended themselves against the more sophisticated war parties of the Fulani **mujahedeen** (Hogben & Kirk-Greene 1966:267). In the hillsides and in the inundated zones of the Logone-Chari confluence, the pagans could effectively keep the Fulani at bay, while the latter dominated the open plains. Though Adama and his successor Lawale regarded the tenacious resistance and continuous presence of large pagan groups as a slur on the Emirate (Kirk-Greene 1969:431-432). After all, converting pagans to Islam is a pious act; enslaving them may be a means to that end, but that was not the goal of the Caliphate slave system. From an analytical point of view, it was essential. Those pagan groups supplied the much needed slaves, and as such the major wealth of the empire, its market commodity, its productive labour. Without the large fringe of slave-raiding Emirates, the Sokoto Caliphate would lack its main revenues: without slaves its domestic production as well as its war system would crumble.

The pagans themselves hardly appreciated their crucial role in preserving the Caliphate. They fought hard and well, and in some cases built up an efficient organisation in resisting **jihād** (Morrison 1982:146); though even their mountain refuges could not prevent them from losing people to the **jihādists** nor from migrating in large numbers. The results described by an English resident in 1920:

'These are the most lawless, ill-governed places I have seen in Nigeria.... Slave dealing and slave raiding are rampant.... Chiefs of minor importance were given rifles with which they were encouraged to attack the wretched pagans (who are) hiding like frightened monkeys on inaccessible hilltops...of course, everyone goes about fully armed: spears, shields, bows, arrows, clubs etc.' (Kirk-Greene 1958:84)

In some cases the pagans accepted Fulani dominance and paid **jiziya** to escape slavery (Johnston 1967: 84), some chiefs even using the Fulani military might to gain dominion over a reluctant chiefdom (Adler 1984: 356). Many instances refer to the pagans themselves paying tribute in slaves in order to avoid being raided. These slaves, then, were the 'product' of their own internal wars (Vaughan 1977, van Beek 1987).

The Adamawa case was quite typical of the 'outpost' Emirates. Though it lasted about a century and its religious authority and military might never were in doubt, there never was a lasting peace. Adama and his successors continually were fighting uprisings from

pagans and incursions from other Emirates on their territory. The Mandara Sultanate was the main adversary for Adamawa, as the Bornu Sultanate was for the whole of the eastern Caliphate. Between their slave raids and external wars, the Emirs had to cope with rebellious kinsmen. From 1878-1898 a great grandson of the Shehu led a group of followers into Mahdism and even established his own community on the west banks of the Mandara mountains (Clarke 1982: 121). From the beginning of the Caliphate (and of the Adamawa Emirate) uprisings were dealt with very severely. Fighting against Sokoto was interpreted as fighting against Islam. In the view of the Shehu and his flagbearers, a clear watershed between Muslim and non-Muslim ran exactly parallel to the distinction for or against Sokoto.

The reason for this is apparent when considering the doctrinal difficulties in waging war against professed Muslims, one of the pivotal problems to which we shall return later. So when the Sultan of Rey Bouba (in North Cameroon) failed to pay tribute, Adama was forced to wage war. The war was not very successful because of lack of proper timing (Mohammadou 1972:178). After the siege of Rey Bouba had ended in a stalemate, the Lamido of Ray, on his own initiative, paid a levy of 1000 hoes, 10 elephants' teeth and 1000 slaves (Mohammadou 1972:182). This element of unclear ascendancy in the Emirate and in the empire was typical. In most areas the Emirs had built their empire in a virtual power vacuum, establishing themselves as rulers where no previous overlords had existed. In a way their **jihād** strategies were aimed at exactly maintaining that kind of vacuum, by eliminating all conflicting claims to power, but without building any administrative organization. The **jihād**-leaders were reluctant organizers, trying to establish a religious/military dominion **per se**. Of the structure of their empire they only built the roof and the foundations, leaving out the living quarters.

Ascetism and war: the two-pronged purity

In the view of the Fulani leaders, the political unrest had important theological advantages. The military instability made for a permanent **jihād**, keeping the people on their religious toes as warriors and - just as important - as scholars. **Jihād** was to be a lifelong enterprise, a way of living and a way of dying. As the **jihād** fought corruption and greed among rival Muslim leaders, those very sins, if checked, would cause the break-down of the empire, as it would add fuel for a legitimate counter **jihād**. Al-Kanemi's reform in the Bornu

empire made such a threat very plausible (Webster & Boahen 1967:37). The Shehu was keenly aware of this problem, though for him it was, before all, a moral issue. He saw and foresaw greed and wordliness prevail upon the ideals of Islamic justice, preached and wrote against it as early as 1809, even before the termination of the **jihād** in Gobir. His poems reflect some bitterness as a few critics accused him of selfish motives:

'I swear by God, the authority of the Shari'a alone. Whoever accepts office to exploit the country for wordly ends, I swear by God, he eats carrion..... I swear by God, it is the knife of Satan cuts him down. (Hiskett 1973:107)

Though most sources are written by the **jihādists** themselves, the ascetism preached as well as practised by the Shehu and his followers, is beyond all doubt. His view of the **jihād** was that of a moral reform, first among the Fulani themselves, then among others. His private life was austere and ascetic: strict honesty in all dealings, no striving for wordly possessions. Cled in the simplest of the long Fulani garments, he tried to live in simple quarters the quiet life of scholarship. He condemned music, except a very limited number of instruments (no drums except for war or marriage, no guitars, no flutes etc.), disapproved of dancing, possessions cults and prostitution (Last 1967:235). Of course the practice of venerating trees and rocks on which sacrifices were performed, and divination by sand, by stars and by spirits were unlawful (Clarke 1982:115). He castigated his young warriors who did not wait the proper time before taking a captive woman as their concubine, threatening them with hell fire (Hiskett 1973:106). His Emirs emulated him in this, like Adama's soon Lawale who punished wearers of short garments, and censored morals strictly inside Yola town; he even forbade whistling, smoking or snuff taking (Kirk-Greene 1958-139). Up to 1894 the all important Vizier of the Sokoto Sultan surprised his European visitors with his soberness. They found him 'seated on a mat placed on the mud floor of the small house he occupied in Kano, quietly studying..... an Arabic manuscript..... in a darkened house, without the kingly garments or the least sign of state' (Last 1967:224). Still, neither the Shehu, nor any of his Emirs, really succeeded in stamping out the customs they condemned.

An inspiring example of course can stimulate the quest for purity among followers. The Shehu undoubtedly was such an inspiration for those who came in contact with him, but the majority of the Fulani hardly ever saw him. Some mechanism of social control - apart from the constant inducement of war and adhortations to study the sacred

texts was necessary. The Fulani notion of purity did help in this. It did not imply an inwards turning into the deep recesses of the soul, searching for the elusive sins. Nor did the Fulani way of life, derived from the independence of cattle nomadism, favour either public confession or a major role of a controlling third party. The sunnitic orthodoxy, in the Fulani version, was a practical, ritualistic religion; purity could be seen. A man (or woman) who meticulously observed the prayers, fasting and other pillars of Islam, was on the road to purity. Scholarship had to show in teaching, piety in preaching, soberness in style of living and the soldier's abandonment to the cause of Islam was to be tested on each battlefield. So purity shone through in one's actions. Even so, the ideals had to be divulged.

One important way of divulging ideals was and is through praise singers (Last 1967:222). As a special category in society, sometimes with caste-like qualities (Smith 1978:39), the bards were the ones who sang on public or semipublic occasion. Extolling the virtues of the rulers (not necessarily those of Islam, as in less orthodox times they did the same with apostate rulers) and deriding the amoral conduct of eventual adversaries, in the Sohoto empire the bards clearly upheld the values with which the Shehu tried to imbue his people. The poems written by the Shehu, by other leaders or by some saintly (**wali**) woman (Last 1967:223) were recited by them. They sang them at weddings, funerals, commemorations of battles and at the feast of the sheep and the end of Ramadan. These praise singers did and do have sense for political reality. As an institution they belonged more to the Hausa courts (Smith 1960) than to the nomadic Fulani tradition. However, after the Fulani take-over, they shifted their allegiance, honed their Islamic standards and sang in praise of soberness. Their tongue could be sharp as well, ridiculing laxness and wordliness. So, as long as the Shehu and his successors clung to the ideals of the **jihād**, they found a powerful backing in these bards.

Thus, by his writing and by having his sober example divulged, the Shehu tried to reform his own society. Throughout the **jihād** and long before it, the main thrust of his message was to his own Fulani tribesmen. In fact the Shehu spent more time trying to overcome their sins and weaknesses, than in any other endeavour.

The vision of man in the Shehu's movement actually is optimistic. The ideal man is that of the scholar-**cum**-soldier; someone versed in the Quran, in Shari'a law, and at the same time skillful in battle; fearless and faithful. Learning meant a great deal: at one desastrous battle, near Alkalawa, the Fulani suffered a severe setback in their

jihād. To stress the completeness of the disaster, Bello remarked that 2000 people had died who knew the Quran by heart (Hiskett 1977:90). Some people lived up to this scholar-soldier ideal, but not everyone. Still, there was a considerable pressure. The Caliphate officials had to conform to this model, as respect for the law and Islam was the source of authority for the whole Caliphate, as it had been the prime mover of the **jihād** (Last 1967: 232). As long as officials upheld the Shari'a, they were unimpeachable, and the full force of orthodoxy was behind them.

Tribalism was one of the vices the Shehu sought to eliminate: as all people are alike for Allah, they should be alike to one another (provided they are Muslims). Even if he rated family ties and obligations as supremely important, those commitments should be secondary to the following of the Shari'a, secondary to the obedience and subjugation to Allah. One of Adamawa's later Emirs carried out this view to some extreme when as an example he executed one of his nephews who had indulged in robbery, and amputated the foot of a grandson for a similar offense (Kirk-Greene 1969: 144). It was one of the deep tragedies of the **jihād** that it increasingly turned Fulani against Hausa, instead of Muslims against apostates. The reasons for this gradual tribalization of the **jihād** are complex, residing in diverging subsistence patterns, the logic and dynamics of political alliances and the strategies for recruiting converts for the movement.

The Shehu never saw the **jihād** as completed. It was but the first stage of a series of major upheavals leading towards the coming of the Mahdi. The Shehu's own contribution, by no means belittled by himself, was that of the Renewer of Faith, one of the many, one of the last. He tried to have the Muslim Community shut off all ties with unbelievers, thus lending authority to the creation of the walled **ribat** fortifications, a vision which clashed with the political reality of constant warring and slave raiding. He expected and prophesied the coming of Gog and Magog, 'small people with big ears', who would come a century after the **hijra**. And as people still point out today: 'There they came, the English!' Last, 1967: 212).

As a theologian and dogmatist the Shehu has been compared with a scholastic author such as Thomas Aquinas (Hiskett 1973:117). The explicite world view and ultimate knowledge that constituted his framework were given in the sacred texts and traditions, and like many Muslim scholars before and after him, Usman's main task consisted in reconciling the discrepancies between his society and the texts. The major way of doing so was changing the society, the minor way was solving all kinds of scholastic riddles on how to

apply the texts to reality. One of the most tenacious problems was to determine the state of sinners and the nature of unbelief: 'Does sin turn a Muslim into an unbeliever?' It is characteristic for the theological foundation of the whole **jihād**, that the war hinged upon this sophisticated question. Following his medieval example, Al-Maghili, the Shehu stated, in defiance of his great and respected teacher el hadj Jibril, that

'as for him who mixes the works of Islam with the works of sin and innovation, he is not an infidel, according to the consensus of the orthodox; but only sins against God and His prophet' (Hiskett 1973: 127).

Still, he took his stand against an overly liberal interpretation: some measure of sinning and some degree of disobedience imply disbelief and do make Muslims into infidels. Drawing this line proved exceptionally difficult, especially when the logic of empire clashed with that of dogmatics. The Shehu's fine set of distinctions was tested to the limit when Bornu shook off its Muslim laxity and initiated a vigourous, successful Islamic reform under Al-Kanemi (Webster & Boahen 1967:38 ff). This eliminated almost all arguments for the Fulani **jihād** against Bornu, as Al-Kanemi aptly pointed out in his letters to the Shehu (Johnston 1967:105-106). To defend the proceedings and save the impetus of the Fulani **jihād**, the Shehu hardened his earlier standpoints on disobedience and moved closer to Jibril, who condemned all sin as infidelity. Incidentally this moved the Shehu closer to Wahhābism too. Thus, the Shehu was forced to walk the tight rope between dogma and political reality, in order to uphold his own integrity and preserve the legitimacy of the **jihād**. But the legimation of actual fighting is a tricky problem in sunnitic orthodoxy in any way (Peters 1977).

Purity and power: the tragic of theocracy

The aim of Usman dan Fodio - and to a large degree his success- was a purification of religion. Within Islam this was not a doctrinal thrust, but a practical one: the people in his days were not living a truly Muslim life, but were corrupted by wealth and paganism. His reform was aimed at changing their ways of life, if possible by changing their ways of thinking. This, of course, runs parallel to the practical side of Islam in general, in which 'doing just things' and 'doing things the right way' is more important than 'believing the right things in the right way'. This insistance on the praxeology of

religion, especially to its every day implementation, fits in easily with Islam, though it might eventually appear to be one of the important aspects of puritan systems in general. They measure the heart against the yardstick of the person's actions.

Where religion is dominant, no secularized life is tolerated. In fact, any hint at secularization is viewed as a sin, and a large one at that: shutting off God from the life of the faithful, and denying the influence or presence of God in the individuals life. This anti-secularization stance is quite natural for Islam, but so is the jihād-tradition. In Islam doctrine and tradition the occurence of and the need for periodic reform is clearly indicated. Twelve Renewers of the Faith were prophesied, as well as the Mahdi, so the kind of movement as described here is part and parcel of Islamic preaching. Maybe by force of this traditions and its recurrent implementation, Islam as a religion had succeeded in staying close to its original form. Important in this respect is the model function of the prophet and his Community. Not only Mohammed's way of life and leadership is a model to emulate, but so is his political history, his exile the organization of his Community, his manner of fighting the 'idolators', the organization of the first Caliphate and so on. Usman dan Fodio was very explicit in his following of Mohammed's example, pointing out meticulously all parallels between the great example and the Fulani situation: like Mohammed he started a new epoch from the day of his exile; like Mohammed he preached his troops before battle; leading them in prayer as his prophetic example. His aim in this was never to become a second prophet: that was not his intention. Mohammed's dealings simply offered the only proven and legitimate strategy.

In another Fulani jihād in the 19th century, the same patterns emerged. When Sheikh Amadou, the leader of the Fulani jihād in the Masina, Mali, faced an overwhelming enemy, he told his followers:

'Ce jour est pour nous un nouveau Bedr. Souvenez-vous de la victoire que notre prophète remporta sur les idolatres coalisés. N'a-t-il attaqué l'ennemi avec 313 combattants seulement? Ne remporta-t-il pus une éclatante victoire? A son exemple, nous attaquerons..... avec 313 hommes prêts à combattre'.(Ba & Daget 1962:213)

So Amadou organized his fighters in parties of exactly 313 soldiers, leaving a small force to defend his camp (as did Mohammed). These Masina Fulani attacked their enemy (which they estimated - themselves - at 100.000) and gained a miraculous and decisive victory.

Thus, jihādist puritans not only strive to regain the values and laws of the pristine organisation, they also try to relive its history.

In each **jihād** the original foundation of religion is recreated. Thus, in the present historiography of Northern Nigeria, the time of Ahmado Bello, the Shehu's son and successor, is often compared with that of the first four Caliphs after Mohammed. Bello's era is praised as the only one in which the Shari'a was applied to practical law in full, as the golden age of Northern Nigeria. Still today at Sokoto, the years are counted from both the **hijra** of Mohammed and the Shehu; a great number of miracles are attributed to the Shehu, which in time more and more came to resemble those of Mohammed. So, this kind of puritan movement quite literally is a repristinization, reliving the redeeming history of the central human figure in that religion.

The idea for a pure state, however, bears some deep contradictions, which compromised Mohammed's Caliphate as well as the Sokoto one. Soberness and a simple life not accommodate easily with an empire, and in the Sokoto Caliphate a tension grew between the means and goals of scholars and those of soldiers. The realization of **jihād** purity never was obtained by the majority of the people. As long as a fair number of highly placed persons did realize it, the structure remained intact. So this kind of unobtainable ideal creates differences between people and thus strengthens a pyramidal and authoritative political structure. The first cleavage was between the orthodox **mujahedeen** and the imperial officers. The consolidation of the **Dar-al-Islam** called for different measures than fighting the revolution. The guerilla warfare, which was so effective against the Hausa states, had to be transformed into regular, central campaigns, regulated by a central government. Soldiers could no longer be kept on booty and heavenly rewards as payments, but had to be fed and payed. This tension between the ideal of purity and the praxis of power was a persistent theme in the Sokoto history.

Power, in itself, is a problem for a puritan movement. Centralization of power is a usual trajectory in the process of differentiation and integration that accompanies state formation (Parsons 1969, Luhman 1982). The ideology of purity, with its insistence on equality of men, is in a sense a current of de-differentiation (Rueschemeyer 1977). The revolutionary movement downplayed inter-personal differences, stressed equality and replaceability, and diminished institutionalized differentiation; in short, in Durkheim's terms, a puritan movement tries to replace organic solidarity by the former mechanic one. This may be seen on the macro-level as a means to revitalize a society (Tiryakian 1985), to reaffirm its human roots (Wallace 1956) and to reestablish some fundamental goals of governmental systems. However, as Luhman indicates (1982), the outcome inevitably is on

the other side: differentiation reaffirms itself and something akin to the former petrified system reappears. This process, on a much smaller level, can be recognized in Turner's treatment of structure versus communitas (Turner 1969). In ritual, equality, togetherness and shared humanness reign supreme, but daily life inevitably catches up with the sobering realization that some people are more equal than others.

Thus, the following contradictions may serve as a case study in a double transformation: first of all that of a political situation by means of an ideologically triggered revolt. Secondly, the transformation of the ideology itself, in order to accomodate its own succes. Religions are very flexible in this latter kind of transformation (Eisenstadt 1973), partly because the gap between what "is" and what "should be" is unbridgeable. In the political reality this tension between what is right and what is feasible generates creative solutions. For the Fulani four areas of contradiction can be distinguished: life style, finance, war and slave raiding.

Organized campaigning was at odds with the traditional nomadic Fulani way of life. So the Sokoto Caliphs tended to settle the nomads in large camps, and to professionalize cattle-herding - by slaves - thus enhancing proto-urbanisation among their often quite unwilling kinsmen. At the same time, however, the nomadic way of life, without possessions or attachments, lies at the roots of the ideal man. Each Muslim should independently, on his own initiative and of his own free will, seek God and submit to Him. The relative absence of organization, as we noted above, fits in well with this model of man; it also correlates very nicely with a nomadic way of life (Stenning 1966). One more factor in this transition was the growing economic interdependence of nomads, agriculturalists and townspeople. For this moment greater riches in goods (pots, knives, swords, clothing etc.) induced a change against the acclaimed soberness (v. Raay 1975:22).

So in settling the nomads - in which they did not wholly succeed - Caliphs organised their armies but uprooted their own value system. Politically this proved the only way of containing the ever emerging power of the Fulani clan-leaders, which - if unchecked- would put in jeopardy the ideals of the **jihād**. One other measure was to build **ribat**, walled fortifications on the border of the empire. The doctrine of the **Dar-al-Islam** is at odds with such a self-containment of Islamic expansion (Peters 1977:71 ff). In the imperial practice however, it proved to be effective not only in keeping out enemies, but also for keeping in nomads. The **jihād** aimed at purifying nomads first, and reasonably succeeded in this. Still, this

'pure way of life' in many ways turned out to be a large change in life style for the nomads, than the (later) colonizations by the British (Hopen 1958:15). The roaming nomads became the elite of an empire within a few years; before the **jihād** they were not allowed to own horses or slaves, after the purification they became settled landlords with scores of slaves to till and herd for them (Hopen 1958:17).

A similar clash between doctrine and the logic of empire ocurred in taxes. The abolition of cattle-tax levied by the Hausa Sarkin was one of the principal goals for the revolution. The first measure after defeating Gobir was to abolish this tax. Even if in the province of Sokoto only the **zakat** was levied, in the outlining Emirates the Muslim leaders were forced by financial considerations to levy a similar cattle tax, to be followed by other non-Shari'a taxes (Smith 1978:262). Especially in the central region of the Hausa states, where the Fulani overtook an existing political system, in the latter half of the 19th century these political organizations gradually re-emerged, dictated by the exigencies of political reality (Smith 1960:154). At the end of the century, the Fulani Emirates in their political practice closely resembled their Hausa predecessors. In some of the peripheral Emirates no such intermediary structure existed. In Adamawa, for instance, the Fulani rule retained more of the original **jihād** flavour (Kirk-Greene 1958) than in Sokoto. In those eastern expanses, the constant war kept the ideal of the scholar-soldier more alive than in the center (la Croix 1966). Maybe the greatest threat to this ideal was not the independent nomadic clansman, but the well-fed, immobilized burocrat. The latter's main concern was not fighting the **jihād**, but succession to a lucrative office. A similar clash of priorities lies in the transformation of a scholar-**cum**-soldier into the founder of a dynasty. Of course this pattern is classical Muslim, but its reenactment in the 19th century Sudan is almost a by-law.

In anthropological theory on the origin of the state, war plays a predominant role in state formation (Harris 1975). Most of these theories adress themselves to pristine states (Carneiro 1970), but in secondary states war is a major structuring principle as well (Goody 1968). The Fulani empire is a case in point. As soon as war is waged, an empire is founded. A pre-existing state makes war an even more efficient means to promote state formation (Vansina 1968). However, war in itself is at odds with the quest for purity, however militaristic and expansionist the ideology may seem. Firstly, the ideal pure soldier has to be the one who shuns violence-per-se. Secondly, any battle tends to draw the revolutionaries into further

engagements. These later battles have less and less to do with the original quest for purity. In the Fulani case this was clear from the start. The most tenacious problem between state and scholars however, remained the akward political fact that most of the fighting took place against Muslims, i.e. against rival Muslim realms such as Bornu, Mandara or Baghirmi. As is indicated above, this triggered off some doctrinal raffinations, but the issue remained doctrinally doubtful. In the Bornu case a rival **jihād** among the Kanuri did claim similar legitimacy for their counter attacks (Cohen & Brenner 1974:10 ff). In the Masina case, the Fulani theocracy was overrun by a Bambara based **jihād** of el hadj Umar from Segu (Webster & Boahen 1967:37). In both instances, the military and imperial reasons for fighting are infinitely more evident than the doctrinal ones. About the only doctrinal accusation el hadj Umar could level against Sheikh Amadou of Masina, was the latter's alliances with pagan groups, which he was forced to in order to defend himself against Umars predatory expansions (Ba & Daget 1962:260). So doctrine became a reluctant helpmeet in empire building.

Finally, the whole structure of state and the ideal of the scholar-soldier (see above) are made possible by a fundamental conflict between doctrine and practice centering around the pagans and slaves, and - more generally - around inequality in society. Without slaves there are neither scholars nor armies. The preaching of the Shehu stressed the equality of all men, but eventually supported a stratified society, in which professed and ackknowledged Muslims were inferior to other Muslims. The Community of Sheikh Amadou of Masina, at one time wanted to do away with all distinctions, especially those pertaining to the artisans guilds. Amadou, himself the most devout and humble of all West African **jihād** leaders, managed to convince his council that the actual removal of inequality would result in an impractical society which was not what Allah wanted (Ba & Daget 1962:185 ff). The more fundamental opposition between Muslims and pagans - and consequently between free men and slaves - remained a problem (cf. Peacock 1978). Slaves were needed, as was argued above, but full domestic and permanent slavery is difficult to harmonize with the mission to spread the **Dar-al-Islam**, and the potential equality of all men before Allah. In order to function properly, the theocracy needed a pool of non-converts, who would never be converted at all. Expansion is one practical solution for this, as during imperial expansion new peoples are being conquered, and thus supply a continuous input of slaves. When the days of expansion are over, doctrine has to accomodate itself to the

fact that permanent pagan settlements reside on its borders. In a large empire such as Sokoto this could be excused by logistical problems of domination over a great distance. In the situation of the much smaller Masina theocracy however, logistical problems were no excuse at all. There, Muslim orthodoxy was forced to make a compact with the pagan groups, such as the Dogon, to have both a safe border and a slave raiding reserve near at hand (Ba & Daget 1962:234; Pern, Alexander & van Beek 1982:57 ff). This factor of slaves as a fundamental resource is somewhat neglected in the literature on state formation (Ajayi & Crowder 1974), while in the discussion on African slavery (Markovitz 1977, Tuden & Plotnicov 1970) the state as such is given little weight.

Eventually, because of the need for slaves, the organizational demands of an empire and the inevitable results of success in war, the theocracy of the **Dar-al-Islam** was gradually restructured into something closely resembling the predator states which it had so succesfully destroyed. So, in the oven of **jihād** purity, doctrine built a clay Utopia, but after the fire had died, the baked model emerged in the form of an empire. But such is the tragedy of theocracy.

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